

Global brands

A survey by a consultancy company has once again ranked the world's top 100 brands. How brand aware are you?

1 Match each company to the corresponding business sector.

Amazon	Microsoft	Zara	Toyota	automotive	transportation	clothing
Mercedes	BMW	Samsung	Google	pharmaceuticals	telecoms equipment	media
UPS	Honda	HSBC	Reuters	computer software	finance service	luxury
Novartis	Coca Cola	Luis Vuitton	Nokia	consumer electronics	Internet services	beverages

2 Guess the names of the following companies, using the list in exercise 1. Check your answers in the article.

World's Top 100 brands

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| (a) the world's top brand: | (d) highest Japanese company: |
| (b) highest non-US company: | (e) highest UK company: |
| (c) highest German company: | Listing by: Interbrand / July 2005 |

The world's Top 100 brands

Some companies' logos and images are internationally famous. The latest ranking, by Interbrand, lists the 100 most valuable global brands. None is stronger than Coca Cola, named the world's top brand for the fourth year in a row, beating Microsoft into second place. Over half the Top 100 are US firms – Finland's Nokia at number 6 is the highest position by a non-US company.

Clear trends include Asia's power as a car manufacturer, with Toyota entering the Top 10 at number 9, the highest Japanese company in the list, while Mercedes is the highest position from a German company. New entries include UPS, Google, Novartis and Zara, the Spanish fashion chain. The highest UK position is the HSBC at number 79.

There is no Visa or Wal-Mart in the list – the criteria for qualifying are tough. Brands must be worth at least \$2.1 billion dollars, and most importantly, one third of the company's income must come from outside its own domestic market. The fastest rising company on the list is South Korea's Samsung in 19th position, which has recently focused on quality, design and innovation.

Traditional advertising is changing. In the past, global fame was largely due to billboards and the 30 second commercial. Product endorsement is still a powerful tool – with actress Uma Thurman promoting Luis Vuitton. Increasingly, advertising is integrated into entertainment, such as BMW's series of short Internet videos. The Internet is playing a key role in helping companies like Google and Amazon reach a global market, without relying on traditional advertising methods. With international competition as fierce as ever, companies will have to keep coming up with ways to keep their brand a focus of consumer attention.

3 Read the whole article. How is brand advertising changing?

4 Consider a well-known brand and create sentences using some of these collocations of the word 'brand'.

BRAND	awareness	loyalty	image	leader	war
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5 Discuss the following questions in small groups. Report your ideas to the class.

- You are going to buy one of the following products. How important is it to buy a well-known brand?
trainers / a mobile phone / a car / a computer
- Would you buy a product because it is endorsed by someone famous? If so, give an example.
- Have you ever been persuaded to buy a product because of an advertisement? If so, describe the advert.
- In order to achieve international brand awareness, which is the most effective form of advertising?